

# **City of Houston**

## **Procedures for Historic District Designation**

***Before you begin*** your designation process, make an appointment to discuss your approach with the Historic Preservation Officer, City of Houston by calling 713/837-7796. You will be provided with an application for the designation process and additional information which will help your effort. Attached is an example of a historic district application. You need to provide the information in the format shown after the **boldface prompt** or written in **boldface**. Another part of the designation application process is to explain the historical significance of your proposed historic district. Below are two examples of a historical significance statement. If your proposed area has previously been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, refer to Example One. If your proposed area has not been listed in the National Register previously, refer to Example Two.

**EXAMPLE ONE** has been composed from information taken from the Westmoreland Historic District which was previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places. If your proposed historic district is already listed, then use the example as a guide for completing the application and attach a copy of the National Register nomination form with letters from the Texas Historical Commission verifying its designation.

**EXAMPLE TWO** has been composed from information taken from the South N. P. Turner Addition Historic District (proposed) which **was not listed** previously in the National Register of Historic Places. Your proposed historic district **does not** need to be listed in the National Register prior to requesting a City of Houston historic district designation but **only needs to meet the criteria** found in the Historic Preservation Ordinance (see application for criteria).

*You will need to provide the following information for both **EXAMPLE ONE** and **EXAMPLE TWO***

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Westmoreland Historic District (could be the original platted area which has the same development history)

**LOCATION:** Westmoreland Addition, Houston, Harris County, Texas, bounded roughly on the north by the rear lot line of parcels fronting Hawthorne; on the east by Spur 527 (I-59); on the west by the rear lot line of parcels fronting Garrott Street; and on the south by the rear lot line of parcels fronting Marshall Street

**APPLICANT:** Westmoreland Civic Association, David Beale, President: contact person is : David Beale, including mailing address; phone number(s):

**SITE INFORMATION:** Being the majority of the original Westmoreland Addition, described as all of Blocks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, Lots 1 through 9, Block 8, Lots 1 through 10, Block 9 and Lots 3 through 24, Block 12, Westmoreland Addition, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas.

**APPROVAL CRITERIA:**

According to Section 33-222 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

Application for designation of an historic district shall be initiated by :

(b)(1) The owners of at least 67 percent of the tracts in the proposed district, which tracts shall constitute 51 percent of the land area within the proposed district exclusive of street, alley and fee simple pipeline or utility rights-of-way and publicly owned land, shall make application for designation of an historic district. In case of a dispute over whether the percentage requirements have been satisfied, it shall be the burden of the challenger to establish by a preponderance of the evidence through the real property records of the county in which the proposed historic district is located or other public records that the applicants have not satisfied the percentage requirements (the Historic Preservation Officer can help you calculate these percentages once the information has been compiled). **The application for designation of Westmoreland as a Historic District was made by the property owners who support designation by written petitions of 67.96 percent of the property owners of the tracts in the proposed district, said tracts constituting 62.05% percent of the land area within the proposed district.**

According to the approval criteria in Section 33-224 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance:

(a)The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and the Planning Commission, in making recommendations with respect to designation, and the City Council, in making a designation, shall consider one or more of the following criteria, as applicable:

S	D	NA	S - satisfies	D - does not satisfy	NA - not applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area possesses character, interest or value as a visible reminder of the development, heritage, and cultural and ethnic diversity of the city, state, or nation;		

(b)Notwithstanding the foregoing, no area in which the majority of buildings, structures or objects is less than 50 years old shall be designated as an historic district.

**The boundary of the proposed historic district includes all existing buildings and sites in the original Westmoreland Addition except the S/2 of Block 8, the S/2 of Block 9 and Lots 1-2, Block 12 which include lots that front Alabama Street (formerly Ross Street). The majority of the existing buildings located on these sites are less than 50 years of age. Nor does the application included Blocks 10 and 11, originally located east of Burlington Avenue. The buildings in these blocks were demolished when Spur 527 of Interstate Highway 59 was constructed in 1957.**

**The Historic Preservation Ordinance provides that classifications of significance must be assigned to: buildings (houses, garages, and carriage houses), structures (carriage steps, hitching posts, fences, street sign monuments), objects and sites in a historic district. These classifications are either contributing, potentially contributing, or non-contributing as indicated on the attached inventory.**

**C=Contributing** - means a building, structure, object or site that is identified as contributing upon the designation of the historic district in which it is located and its original architectural integrity is intact (50 years of age or older).

**PC=Potentially Contributing** - means a building, structure, object or site with incompatible alterations or deteriorating conditions that, if reversed, would reinforce the cultural, architectural or historical significance of the historic district in which it is located (50 years of age or older).

**NC=Noncontributing** - means a building, structure object or site that does not reinforce the cultural, architectural or historical significance of the historic district in which it is located and is less than 50 years of age.

**According to the inventory, there are a total of 199 classifications, including 90 contributing and 32 potentially contributing sites (50 years of age or older) which is 61.30% of the total inventory. There are 77 non-contributing sites which include 72 buildings (less than 50 years of age) and 5 vacant lots which is 38.70% of the total inventory. Not only does the boundary of the proposed historic district encompass most of the original plat for the neighborhood, but the entire area also meets the criteria of the ordinance. Furthermore, the majority of the buildings are 50 years of age or older—the majority being constructed during the same time period of architectural significance, i.e. 1902 to 1935.**

**If your proposed historic district is already listed in the National Register but you propose a smaller district or larger district for the city designation, explain the reason for your approach. If the boundary of the proposed city historic district is larger than the National Register District because it includes an area omitted from that designation, explain why. You might find that the National Register nomination stated that “a loss of integrity of buildings in the southwestern portion of the original Westmoreland Addition caused this portion to be eliminated from the nomination.” After analyzing the classification of the buildings in the area omitted in the National Register nomination, the following conclusion was made. This portion contains a total of 25 buildings which include 7 contributing and 7 potentially contributing buildings (50 years of age or older). Also, there are 11 non-contributing buildings (less than 50 years of age). Since this area includes a total of 56% contributing and potentially contributing buildings and 44% non-contributing buildings, the area meets the criteria that 51% must be contributing or potentially contributing found in the Historic Preservation Ordinance.**

**For your information, the National Register criteria only has two classifications for buildings-contributing and non-contributing. The 7 buildings above that were classified as potentially contributing in the City Historic District were classified as non-contributing in the National Register nomination because they had lost a significant degree of their architectural integrity even though they were 50 years of age or older. Thus, they could not be classified as contributing and were classified as non-contributing. Since only 7 were contributing and 18 were non-contributing, this area did not meet the National Register criteria that 51% of the buildings in the area must be contributing. Since, the Houston Historic Preservation Ordinance provided for a third classification, the area did qualify for**

**city designation. Since the ordinance reviews exterior rehabilitation of buildings that have lost their architectural integrity (classified as potentially contributing), those inappropriate alterations will be reversed. When the buildings change their classifications to contributing as a result of appropriate restoration, the National Register District nomination could be amended later to include the omitted area as the integrity of the buildings in the area is returned. Therefore, the initial designation of an area as a city historic district and the review process provided in the ordinance to enhance architectural integrity of the buildings within the district, could qualify the area for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in the future. And of course, the best form of protection for any historic district is the designation by the City of Houston.**

## EXAMPLE ONE

(Example narrative of a significance statement for a city historic district application where the district **has been designated** previously by the National Register. Therefore, the narrative is abbreviated from the National Register nomination which is attached as back-up)

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE: (For Westmoreland Historic District)

According to the National Register nomination, the Westmoreland Historic District encompasses Houston's first planned, elite residential neighborhood. Platted in August 1902 as a 44-acre subdivision of the Obedience Smith Survey, the 12 block addition was located in open countryside at the southwest corner of the city of Houston. The planning of the addition and the design and scale of its houses reflect trends in the development of residential real estate and domestic architecture in early 20th-century Houston.

W. W. Baldwin (1845-1936), a lawyer and railway official, organized the South End Land Company, which developed Westmoreland, in June 1902. Although he lived in Burlington, Iowa, Baldwin was President of the St. Louis, Keokuk & Northwestern Railway and the Chicago, Burlington & Kansas City Railway at the time he began investing in Houston suburban real estate. In addition to developing Westmoreland, Baldwin acquired the Rice Ranch in Southwest Harris County in 1908, which he developed as an agricultural tract called Westmoreland Farms. In 1909 he had the new town of Bellaire platted as Westmoreland Farms. It was designed by the Kansas City landscape architect, Sid J. Hare. Through his choice of professional consultants, Baldwin introduced a new level of sophistication to the development of suburban real estate in Houston.

To plan the Westmoreland Addition, Baldwin retained the St. Louis engineer, Julius Pitzman (1837-1923). Pitzman planned 15 to 17 private place subdivisions developed in the West End of St. Louis between 1868 and 1905. These included the grandest—Vandeventer Place (1870), the Forest Park Addition, comprised of Westmoreland Place and Portland Place (1887), and Bell Place (1892-1904)—as well as more modest private streets such as Flora Boulevard (1890). The Westmoreland Historic District is the only known work of community planning by Pitzman in Texas. The new Westmoreland neighborhood so impressed Mrs. Mary Gentry Waldo, that she had her massive towered-villa, Victorian-era house dismantled on Rusk Avenue and reconstructed, with considerable modifications, on Westmoreland Avenue between 1903 and 1905. Her son, Wilmer Waldo, a civil engineer, handled the project. The house was originally designed in 1886 by George E. Dickey, a prominent Houston architect. After relocation, the house was “modernized” with the removal of the tall tower, replacing the wooden porches with an arched brick loggia and cladding the house in brick. It is a very significant and architecturally interesting building in Houston.

The Westmoreland Addition reproduced the identifying features of the St. Louis private place. Its name evoked the prestige of one of the streets in St. Louis's Forest Park Addition at a time when other new Houston subdivisions were generally identified by the developer's surname. Its central thoroughfare, Westmoreland Avenue, was platted at 100 feet in width, although it featured extremely deep sidewalk reserves instead of a central median. The cast stone piers and street gates erected at the eastern entrance to Westmoreland Avenue, transmitted to Houston the most recognizable emblems of the

St. Louis private place and architecturally declared Westmoreland's "private" status. These gates and two blocks of houses on the east side of Burlington (Blocks 10 and 11), were demolished in 1957 when the Spur 527 was constructed for Interstate Highway 59.

Because Westmoreland's restrictive covenants included "flats" among permissible residential uses, apartment buildings began to be built in the district in the 1920's (these are contributing buildings to the district today). However, in the 1950's and 1960's, large intrusive garden apartment complexes were built. Demolition of houses for these complexes resulted in a loss of integrity for parts of the neighborhood. Since the mid-1970's, intensive efforts by Westmoreland residents to reverse the neighborhood's decline have led to the rehabilitation of its original housing stock and construction of new housing that is compatible in scale and detail with the district's historical character.

The mixture of Late Victorian-era, Queen Anne style homes, Colonial Revival houses and many Craftsman influenced style homes, reflects architecturally the historic district's transitional stage from late 19th-century patterns of suburban domestic habitation to those characteristic of the 20th-century. The architectural diversity of its housing stock enhances the district's association with community development patterns of suburban growth in Texas during the early 20th-century. Evaluated within the context of Suburban Development in Texas, 1881-1945, the district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 16, 1994 (N. R. Reference No. 94000859).

## EXAMPLE TWO

(Example narrative of a significance statement for a city historic district application where the district **has not been designated** previously by the National Register. Therefore, more information is required to justify if the district satisfies the criteria of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Also, include bibliography and footnotes and references to the sources which can be footnoted or shown after each paragraph)

### **HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE: (South Turner Historic District)**

On April 23, 1998 an application for the South N. P. Turner Addition Historic District was submitted along with petitions signed by a majority of the property owners for an area which includes all of Blocks 10, 11 and the south half of Block 12, located at the southwest corner of the original Turner Addition. The area being proposed as a historic district was developed originally as a unique and exclusive “enclave neighborhood” which is historically significant because it was uncommon compared to other Houston neighborhood development of the period. Originally, nine historically significant houses, most built with quarters and greenhouses, were constructed in the popular styles designed by Houston’s most prominent architects of the period. Seven of these historically significant houses exist today to comprise the proposed historic district. Not only does the size and setting of these houses reflect the historical civic stature, social prominence and financial success of their original owners, but the “neighborhood enclave” was developed because this particular subdivision lacked restrictive covenants. Therefore, these particular owners purchased at least quarter block allotments for both family members and for social and business associates with whom they were closely connected. These citizens were among the most prominent in Houston. Therefore, the proposed South N. P. Turner Addition Historic District possesses character, interest, and value as a visible reminder of the development and heritage of an urban residential neighborhood whose vicissitudes reflect real estate transformations in Houston, the only major city in the United States not to adopt a zoning code during the 20th century.

Creating enclaves of family members or professional associates was one way that a prominent segment of Houston’s 19th-century citizenry, living within unrestricted areas, sought to stabilize urban residential real estate. Blocks 10, 11, and the south half of 12 of the Turner Addition represent this pattern of development. Among those attracted to the area included individual residents who made extraordinary contributions to the professional, civic, and cultural life of Houston, including the Bakers, Lovett, Belk, Kirkland, Lipper, Armstrong, Scott, and Gaines families. These families had a profound influence on Houston with their commitment to the city’s civic, business and cultural activities. Not only did they contribute to enhancing the quality of life in Houston, but also to its prominence and prosperity. These families were leaders in their respective fields, including law, real estate, oil industry, metal manufacturing, cotton processing, transportation, insurance, banking, medicine and education. The contributions the Bakers have made alone in virtually all aspects of the community are profound.

While somewhat similar historical settlement patterns occurred in other blocks of the Turner Addition, further to the north, the proposed historic district personifies a unique, contiguous and historically significant type development with residents from the best citizenry of Houston. The remaining houses of the Armstrong, Scott, Baker Brothers, Lovett, Lipper, and Gaines families rank among the best remaining examples of domestic architecture of the 1920s, ’30s, and ’40s in the Turner Addition neighborhood, especially rich in 20th-century residential architecture. The houses constructed, designed by Houston’s most prominent architects, usually included servant quarters and greenhouses. The size and architectural styles of the buildings also reflected the social prominence and financial success of their owners. All of the houses are identified also with

architects who have influenced the heritage of Texas with their work, especially C. B. Schoeppl, the architect of the Lipper House. The contributing houses in the district exemplify a range of architectural styles popular in Houston from the 1920s through the 1940s. They also exemplify the country house type, the most fashionable type of elite suburban house in Houston during the period. (*Houston: The Unknown City by Marguerite Johnston*)

Today, the proposed historic district maintains its unique early to mid-20th-century significance in its architecture and in its spacious landscaped sites despite more recent development that has not respected earlier conventions of setbacks and landscaping. The proposed area does not include the other portion of Turner, which was developed with smaller houses (usually four or five to a blockface) and older apartment buildings, many of which have been replaced. This proliferation of “mixed” building types is quite different when contrasted to the proposed historic district where a majority of the development still includes historically significant, larger houses each situated on a spacious, landscaped quarter block lot and whose residents had a close kinship, social and/or business affiliation.

The portion of Turner that is proposed for the historic district is an upper-middle income subdivision in Houston, Harris County, Texas, that began to be developed about 1919. The proposed historic district is located near the Museum of Fine Arts, two-and-a-half miles southwest of downtown Houston and adjacent to the Broadacres Historic District (NR, 1980) and the West Eleventh Place Historic District (NR, 1997; City Historic District, 1997). It is part of 28 blocks of what was left of the original Turner Addition after other private place neighborhoods were carved from the original 55 blocks, platted in a gridiron configuration and subdivided into rectangular lots. A range of house types built between the 1920s and the 1990s occupies lots in the original neighborhood. Prior to the 1970s, most buildings respected the setback lines and landscaping established in the 1920s. This gave the Turner Addition the appearance of an early 20th-century town neighborhood characteristic of many Texan towns and cities. Since the 1970s, townhouses which do not respect earlier conventions of setbacks and landscaping have been built and now impact the old neighborhood.

The Turner Addition had been platted in 1871 as a subdivision of 55 blocks, spanning from what is now Richmond Avenue on the north to what is now one block south of Bissonnet Avenue on the south, and from what is now Roseland Street on the east to what is now Graustark Street on the west. This tract was more than two miles outside the town of Houston in 1871. It was not developed until Montrose Boulevard was extended to connect with Main Street (Boulevard) in 1916. Of the original 55 blocks of Turner, 33 were replatted as private place subdivisions (i.e. Rossmoyne, Chelsea Place, Shadyside, West Eleventh Place, Shadowlawn, Waverly Court and Broadacres). As Houston’s suburban periphery advanced toward the Turner Addition, its northernmost tiers of blocks were replatted in 1914 as the subdivision of Rossmoyne. The southernmost tier was replatted between 1919 and 1923 for incorporation in the subdivisions of Shadyside, West Eleventh Place, Waverly Court, and Shadowlawn. Portions of the easternmost blocks were incorporated into Chelsea Place. All of these subdivisions conformed to the private place model. All had restrictive covenants prescribing single-family residential occupancy, and most had gate piers to symbolize their private place status. The close proximity of Turner’s remaining 22 blocks to these elite neighborhoods made them very desirable. The portion of the Turner Addition that was not replatted also began to be developed after the extension of Montrose Boulevard. However, its block structure, based on the street grid of downtown Houston, was not reconfigured. Because property in the Turner Addition was not under unified ownership, restrictive covenants were never imposed. (*National Register (N.R.) Nominations - 1101 Milford by Stephen Fox and West Eleventh Place by Marta McBride Galicki*)



The earliest houses were built on Block 11, back to back, one at 1200 Bissonnet Avenue (demolished and now the site of 4 townhouses) in 1923 for Craig C. Belk, an insurance company executive. The other house, located at 1207 Berthea Avenue (demolished and site of 5 townhouses), was built in 1923 for banker, William A. Kirkland. Belk and Kirkland were both members of Houston's civic-minded and socially prominent citizens. Following graduation from Princeton and a term in Law School (UT-Austin), Kirkland started as a clerk in 1920 at the First National Bank. In a relative short time, he became Vice-President (1930-33), a director (1927-1933) and President (1955-1956). After First National merged with City National Bank in 1956, he became Chairman, Board of Directors (1956-1968). He excelled in many other areas as well, including the Houston Board of Education (1927-1933) as well as trustee for three colleges, Councilman-at-large, City of Houston (1947-1948) and President of the Texas Banker's Association (1947-1948). Later in life, he would compile the history of his bank, the First National Bank, which is the oldest chartered bank in Houston which constructed the first steel-framed skyscraper in Houston in 1905. Kirkland published the history of the bank as "*Old Bank-New Bank, The First National Bank, Houston, 1866-1956.*" Kirkland was also friends with the Baker Brothers, who eventually would become his neighbors. (*The Houston Heritage of National Bank Notes by Bill Logan*)

Joining their business associates in the "neighborhood enclave" were the brothers W. Browne Baker, a banker, and James A. Baker, Jr., a lawyer, whose father, James A. Baker, had acquired the southwest quadrant of Block 12. In 1925 Browne Baker and his wife, Adelaide Lovett, built a house on the site next to the Kirkland House at 1213 Berthea Avenue in Block 11. After graduation from Rice Institute, Adelaide Lovett went to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. Her mother, Mrs. Edgar Odell Lovett, went with her. After earning her *diplome de la Sorbonne* in 1922, Adelaide came back to Houston and married W. Browne Baker. In 1924 she became one of the founders of the Houston Junior League. During World War II, W. Browne Baker was selected by Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal, to head up the Navy's Department contract negotiation section charged with the task of devising contracts that would encourage companies to find ways to save money; handle the purchase of billions of dollars worth of ships, planes and equipment; and devise ways to handle contracts with integrity. For his service, Baker was awarded the Department of the Navy's Distinguished Civilian Service medal, the highest honor the navy can give to a civilian. Baker and his wife, Adelaide, lived in the house until 1949 when they moved to River Oaks and sold the house at 1213 Berthea to Baker's niece. (*2-Minute Histories of Houston-Houston Business Journal by Gavin Berry and Betty Chapman; Houston: The Unknown City by Marguerite Johnston*)

In 1926 James A. Baker, Jr. and his wife, Bonner Means Baker, built a house next to the Belk House (backing up to the Browne Baker House) at 1216 Bissonnet. In 1923 James A. Baker, Jr. commenced development of the private-place neighborhood of Broadacres on the western edge of the Turner Addition, adjoining the west sides of Blocks 11 and 12. Although Baker owned a house site in Broadacres, he did not build there. Mrs. Baker recalled in the late 1970s that she and her husband could not afford the \$25,000 minimum construction cost required for a house in Broadacres. So they built what they intended as their interim house on Bissonnet overlooking Broadacres. Lots in Broadacres were much larger than in the Turner Addition and the east-west streets in the adjoining subdivisions were not aligned. To create a spatial sense of exclusivity, Broadacres was entered only at its southeast and northeast corners. Although Graustark Street was platted to run south along the Turner Addition's west property line all the way to Bissonnet, it was never opened south of Barkdull. Therefore, Berthea Avenue ends at the west property line of the Turner Addition. Like the restricted West Eleventh Place and Waverly Court subdivisions

on the south side of Bissonnet, the 1200 block of Berthea attained, de-facto, the status of a private street. (*N. R. Nomination, Broadacres by Anne Bohm and Stephen Fox*)

During World War I, James A. Baker, Jr. served his country as a second lieutenant, earning a citation for bravery before coming home to join his family's law firm. His son, James Addison Baker III, was born in the house at 1216 Bissonnet and later became Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan Administration and Secretary of State in the Bush Administration. He now is honorary chair of the Baker Institute and a member of Rice University Board of Governors. He is also a senior partner in the firm of Baker & Botts, the oldest law firm in Houston and one of the most respected in the nation.

His grandfather, Captain James A. Baker, was founding chairman of Rice Institute's Board of Trustees, serving from the charter of Rice in 1891 until his death in 1941. Captain Baker is the namesake of Rice University's Baker College. It was Captain Baker who won renown as the personal attorney and friend of William Marsh Rice and who represented Rice's estate, after Rice was murdered in 1900, in the litigation concerning the disposition of Rice's fortune (over \$5 million) and the establishment of the Rice Institute. On April 29, 1904 Captain Baker and the Rice Institute Board took control of the assets which led to the development of the school, one of the nation's finest institutions of higher learning. Baker also served as a Director of Union National Bank, beginning in 1905, and as President of South Texas Commercial National Bank (1914-1926). (*William Marsh Rice and His Institute, by Muir; The Houston Heritage of National Bank Notes by Bill Logan*)

In Baker's role as Chairman of the Board, South Texas Commercial National Bank, he played an important part in avoiding the horrible bank failures that were common in the country after the Stock Market Crash of 1929. When all the national Bank presidents as well as a number of other men prominent in financial circles, including Jesse H. Jones, were meeting intensely to avoid the failure of two weak banks in Houston. It was during this time that Baker convinced the President of South Texas Bank, who argued that the two banks deserved to fail due to incompetent management, that if any bank failed, there would be a rush from depositors on all Houston banks, resulting in a chain of bank failures no one could stop once it began. After South Texas National changed its position, the other holdout, Union National, agreed unanimously to support a plan to change ownership of one bank (Houston National) and by assessing all the solvent banks a certain percentage of their assets plus contributions from businesses to absorb the failing funds of the other bank (Public National). Due to the efforts of these Houstonians, no bank in Houston failed during this dark time in U. S. history. (*Old Bank-New Bank by Kirkland*)

Judge James A. Baker, Sr., the father of Captain Baker, had come to Houston from Huntsville, Texas in 1876 and joined the law firm founded by Peter W. Gray in 1840 (later known as Gray, Botts and Baker). In 1887 when his son, Capt. James A. Baker, joined the firm, it became known as Baker, Botts and Baker. The firm developed into the most respected legal organization in Houston and became one of the most prestigious and influential, strong managing-partner forms of organization in the country. Baker's law firm and its partners were involved virtually in every type of legal services for all the major institutions and businesses in Houston. They were responsible for the legal matters associated with the most successful and powerful business ventures which made Houston one of the top financial centers of the world. Without a doubt, the firm and its partners contributed and actively participated in every social, civic and cultural endeavor in Houston, which was not only encouraged by the firm but a policy. (*Baker & Botts in the Development of Modern Houston, by Kenneth Lipartito and Joseph Pratt*)

Judge James Addison Baker, Sr. built in 1877 a large and impressive home at 1104 San Jacinto at Lamar (demolished in 1930). His son, Capt. James A. Baker, and his family lived in the home with the elder Baker. Capt. Baker built a Greek Revival style playhouse for his daughter, Alice Graham Baker, in 1893-1894 at the site (now located at 1213 Berthea). Baker, Sr. also served as a Director of Houston National Bank, when it was chartered in 1889. The elder Baker died in 1897. In 1899 the house on San Jacinto Street was sold and Capt. Baker and his family moved to 1416 Main Street, the former home of Samuel K. Dick. The playhouse was moved to the house on Main Street where the family lived until 1923. It was in that year that the family moved to 2310 Baldwin (demolished c. 1955), known as "The Oaks." It had been built in 1909 and had been the home of Edwin B. Parker, a law partner of Baker's, who had died in 1923. Baker lived there until his death but bequeathed the house to Rice University. Rice transferred ownership of the house to the M. D. Anderson Foundation for the first cancer hospital in Texas, known as M. D. Anderson Hospital for Cancer Research. (*Monroe Dunaway Anderson, His Legacy, A History of the Texas Medical Center by N. Don Macon*)

Before the Bakers moved to Baldwin Street, the playhouse was once again relocated to 207 Bremond, which was on a lot adjoining "The Oaks" and also the residence of Baker's daughter, Mrs. Preston Moore. The Moore family children enjoyed the playhouse until it was moved once again circa 1930 to the James A. Baker, Jr. house at 1216 Bissonnet. The playhouse was used by the Baker children until 1949 when it was moved to its present location at 1213 Berthea, the former home of W. Browne Baker. Baker had decided to move to River Oaks and sold his home at 1213 Berthea to his niece, Alice Baker Jones and her husband, John H. Meyers. Obviously, Alice Baker Jones Meyers had the playhouse relocated to the site of her new home because it had belonged to her mother. Alice Baker Jones was the daughter of Murray B. Jones and Alice Graham Baker, for whom the playhouse was built. Alice Graham Baker was the founder of the Neighborhood Centers, Inc., a service organization still working toward community improvement. An annual award named the Alice Graham Baker "Crusader" Award is now presented to individuals for outstanding service to the community. (*Houston's Forgotten Heritage, by Houghton, Scardino, Blackburn and Howe; Personnal Narrative by John H. Meyers on May 16, 1978; Houston Post-Dispatch, Oct. 1926*)

Captain James A. Baker, father of James A. Baker, Jr., and W. Browne Baker, had acquired the southwest quadrant of Block 12 while the southeast quadrant was acquired by Edward Lipper. He was a son of Arthur Lipper, who founded the Lipper Motor Car Company, Inc. in 1915. Prior to commencing his firm, Arthur Lipper was the City Secretary of Houston from 1900-1905. Arthur Lipper "was a well known figure in the business world of Houston for the past 35 years (and) was ranked among the leaders in the business as well as the civic affairs of the city." Arthur's son, Edward Lipper, eventually joined his father in the business by becoming the Vice-President. Edward Lipper continued in the automobile business until 1925 when he became engaged in the more lucrative loan and real estate brokerage business. By doing so, he continued the legacy established by his father, who had been engaged in the same business. The Lippers belonged to a German Jewish family that was not part of Houston's elite. However, the opportunities afforded by Houston's business climate provided the environment for a highly motivated individual, like Edward Lipper, to successfully gain prominence in his own right among Houston's business elite. As a result, he chose to purchase the site in the Turner Addition for his future home. Lipper later became the manager of the Evergreen Cemetery (R.T.H.L., 1993), which is located at 500 Altic Street off Harrisburg Boulevard. (*New Encyclopedia of Texas*)

On May 1, 1925 (*The Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Bulletin*), Lipper engaged Carlos B. Schoeppl, who founded the prestigious firm of C. B. Schoeppl & Company, to design

his house at 1210 Berthea. Schoeppl took his formal training at Beaux Arts, Paris and the Royal Academy before establishing his practice in San Antonio in 1922. Shortly thereafter, he moved to Houston and established a second office there in the Humble Building. Schoeppl is known for his special study of Spanish architecture and was one of the leading exponents of that style both in Texas and across the United States. Mr. Schoeppl had also given special study to Spanish furnishings, and a unique feature of his work was the adoption of Texas flowers and materials as a motif. He designed some of the finest homes and public buildings in Houston and elsewhere. In addition to his house design for Lipper, other notable works in Houston include: the Fred J. Heyne House at 220 Westmoreland (N. R., 1994); the Chapman-Bryan House at 15 Courtlandt Place (N.R., 1980); J. W. Link, Jr. House at 517 Lovett Boulevard and the W. McIver Streetman House at 1112 Milford. (*New Encyclopedia of Texas*)

The Great Depression ruptured the original families of the enclave network. Mr. and Mrs. Lipper sold their house to the industrialist, Frank Mansfield Burkhead, and his wife, Annie Clarkson, by 1934. Burkhead was president of an industrial enterprise, the Burkhead Manufacturing Company. The company had been established in 1923 for the manufacturing of a variety of sheet metal products and also for the operation of a lithographing plant. Mr. Burkhead had distinguished himself in his industry also by serving as the president and as a member of the board of directors of the Texas Manufacturers Association. His daughter, Majorie, inherited the house where she resided many years with her husband, Isham M. Wilford, a Houston attorney. Mr. I. M. Wilford currently resides in the property with a life tenancy. (*The Texas Gulf Coast, Its History and Development*)

Block 12 was purchased originally by Captain James A. Baker, whose sons built homes in Block 11 to the south. His son, W. Browne Baker, had married Adelaide Lovett and lived at 1213 Berthea. For that reason, Adelaide's brother, H. Malcolm Lovett, purchased the southwest quadrant of Block 12 from James A. Baker, who also was his employer. The Lovetts were also closely connected to the Burkheads and the Wilfords.

In 1933-34, H. Malcolm Lovett and his wife, Martha Wicks, built their house at 1214 Berthea. They engaged architect, Stayton Nunn, in 1933 to design their house (and the addition in 1951). The contract for construction was awarded to Fred Wammel on November, 1933 (*The Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Bulletin*).

Henry Malcolm Lovett, who was the son of Dr. Edgar Odell Lovett, was a graduate of Rice Institute and Harvard law school. Lovett, like James A. Baker, Jr., was a member of Houston's most prestigious corporate law firm, Baker, Botts, Parker & Garwood. Lovett embodied the family and professional associations that bound these householders together. During his illustrious career, Lovett served on the boards of directors of many of the most important business corporations in Houston. He also served on the boards of directors of a number of philanthropic institutions and was chairman of the Board of Directors of Rice University from 1967 to 1973. He also served on the Board of Advisors of Harvard Law School from 1965 to 1971. Among the many contributions of Mrs. H. Malcolm Lovett was her affiliation with the Texas Children's Foundation, of which she was a charter member in 1947. Lovett and his wife continued to own the house at 1214 Berthea for the duration of their lives. (*Baker and Botts by Lapartiti and Pratt; Handbook of Texas; New Encyclopedia of Texas; A Houston Legacy by Marie Phelps McAshan*)

Stayton Nunn, the architect of 1214 Berthea, had been a fellow classmate of H. Malcolm Lovett at Rice. Nunn later became a design critic at Rice. In the 1920's Nunn had also worked for one

of Houston's most prominent architects, William Ward Watkin. According to Stephen Fox, an Anchorage Fellow and professor of architectural history at Rice, the best buildings designed by Watkin was during the time that Stayton Nunn was in his employ.

Stayton Nunn, just prior to designing Lovett's house at 1214 Berthea, completed his design in 1932 for the Garden Villas Elementary School at 7185 Santa Fe Drive with Edward Wilkinson. Also, he had previously assisted Ralph Adams Cram (Cram & Ferguson) with the design in 1926 of Blanche Harding Sewall's house at 3460 Inwood Drive. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson of Boston had been recommended by Dr. Edgar Odell Lovett, president of Rice Institute, to work on the designs of the buildings for the new institute. Among the buildings designed in 1912 was the Administration Building, now known as Lovett Hall. It was renamed in honor of Dr. Lovett, who was the first president of Rice Institute, being appointed in 1907. (*American Architects Directory*)

Block 10 of the Turner Addition also took shape as a family enclave, although over a longer period of time. With the construction of the houses at 1122 and 1128 Bissonnet and the one at 1131 Bethea, the residents in Block 10 reiterated and amplified the "neighborhood enclave" pattern of development also found in Blocks 11 and 12, which comprise the proposed historic district. In 1923-24, J. Virgil Scott, and his wife, Louise Thomsen, built the house at 1122 Bissonnet Avenue in the southeast quadrant of the block. Scott was an officer in the cotton brokerage firm of Anderson, Clayton and Company. It was founded in Oklahoma in 1907 by Will and Benjamin Clayton and Frank and Monroe Dunaway Anderson. Anderson later established the M. D. Anderson Foundation for cancer research with assets of over \$3.5 million. The Anderson, Clayton and Company moved its headquarters to Houston in 1916 and became the largest cotton concern in the world and handled the processing and shipping of cotton at the Port of Houston where they invested millions in the Long Reach Terminals. In fact, it was the dynamic force of the cotton business which created the port where great commerce developed, making necessary the establishment of new terminals and expansion of existing facilities which resulted in the port becoming ranked as one of the top ports in the world. Scott was also a board member of the San Jacinto Trust Company, which had been established in 1920. One of its activities included the creation of the Braeswood Corporation, of which Scott was a director and officer. It developed the Braeswood subdivision in 1926 which was a tract of 1,000 acres that became a highly-restricted, large residential addition west of Main Street and South of Bellaire Boulevard. Braeswood's chief engineer, William Giddings Farrington, would later developed the Tanglewood Subdivision. (*Houston and Cotton by Max H. Jacobs and H. Dick Golding; Braeswood, An Architectural History by Anchorage Foundation of Texas (Stephen Fox, researcher); Tanglewood, The Story of William Giddings Farrington by Mary Catherine Farrington Miller; Ray Miller's Houston*)

Next door to the Scott House, the southwest quadrant of the block was developed at the same time with a house for the physician and surgeon, Edward M. Armstrong, and his wife, Ethel Gaines. After World War II, Mrs. Armstrong's niece and nephew-in-law, Ella Campbell Myer and Edward G. Pearson, bought the Scott House. Mrs. Armstrong's sister, Miss Emma C. Gaines, built the one-story house at 1131 Berthea Avenue circa 1948. Miss Gaines, who had lived with the Armstrongs until her retirement (after several decades as a teacher in Houston), built her own home to the north of her sister's house. Following Mrs. Armstrong's death, Mr. and Mrs. Pearson moved into the Armstrong House. Mrs. Armstrong as well as her relatives belonged to the circle of old Houston families that included the Baker and Kirkland families and their associates. (*City Directories, Houston*)

Mr. and Mrs. Kirkland moved from their house at 1207 Berthea by 1935, which was subsequently occupied for a short period by J. Coulter Means, the brother of Bonner Means Baker (wife of James A. Baker, Jr.). Later Mr. and Mrs. William S. Farish, Jr. lived there. He was the son of William Stamps Farish, who founded Humble Oil, and Libby Rice, a childhood friend of the senior Baker's children. (*Handbook of Texas*)

Lack of restrictive covenants, which would ultimately allow non-residential land use, was apparently the motivation for an investor's memorandum of 1922 which foresaw the need for clients to buy at least a quarter block allotment "as you would in this way be able to select your neighbor." (*C. V. Jarrell to James L. Autry, Jr., 4 May 1922, James L. Autry Papers*). This protective investment advice attracted to Turner, property owners who by their home site construction and close association, created a pattern of home building referenced in this memorandum. The development reflected patterns akin to that prevailing in Houston before residential additions began to be developed as planned subdivisions under the control of a single development corporation. The motivation for the memorandum was realized when the Craig Belk House became the Feather & Feather School of Design in the 1930's. It was never used as a single family residence again but was eventually demolished and now the site of townhouses. In fact, a two-story, large U-shaped apartment building was constructed on the lot at 1121 Berthea behind the Scott House (1122 Bissonnet) and another building was constructed on the lot at 5201 Mt. Vernon behind the Armstrong House (1128 Bissonnet), which altered the rhythm of the only quarter block house sites. However, both buildings have been demolished and the lots are now incorporated as part of the green spaces behind the historic buildings facing Bissonnet. Elsewhere the remaining portions of the "enclave neighborhood maintained its history of residential occupancy.

After the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Burkhead, their daughter, Marjorie and her husband, I. M. Wilford, moved into 1210 Berthea where Mr. Wilford lives today. Mr. and Mrs. Lovett and Mr. and Mrs. James A. Baker, Jr. owned their houses until their deaths. The house at 1213 Berthea, although sold by the W. Browne Baker family, has been used by subsequent owners as a residence. Edgar Pearson lived at 1128 Bissonnet until the 1970's. In the 1970s the Scott and Pearson (Armstrong) houses became the offices of a group medical practice. In 1996 they were restored, along with 1131 Berthea. They are now used as a law office complex but appear residential in nature and with no visible signage. In fact, the recent restoration efforts of the Scott and Armstrong houses was recognized by the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance which presented its Good Brick Award to the owner in 1996.

The proposed historic district exemplifies general trends in building practice characteristic of the Houston residential development in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s where its most prominent citizens lived. But it was unusual and unique for this particular area of the N. P. Turner Addition. The two Baker houses, the Scott and Armstrong houses, and the Lovett House are examples of the "country house" type of suburban house introduced to Houston in the 1910s. They were designed in the different historical styles popular from the 1920s through the 1940s. Characteristic of the country house type, they were designed to open to daylight, the prevailing breeze, and their surrounding gardens. In the use of live oaks as street trees in the 1100 and 1200 blocks of Bissonnet and the 5000 block of Mount Vernon Street, the district exemplifies a pattern of civic landscaping especially associated with the Main Boulevard parkway-Rice University sector of Houston.

The proposed historic district contains buildings designed by some of the foremost architects practicing in Houston during the early 20th-century. The Scott house (1122 Bissonnet) and the Armstrong house (1128 Bissonnet) were designed in 1923 by William Ward Watkin (1886-1952).

Watkin, working for Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson of Boston, had moved to Houston to supervise the construction of the Administration Building of Rice Institute (cornerstone being laid March 2, 1911) and was invited to stay by Dr. Lovett, who appointed him instructor in architectural engineering when the institute opened in 1912. Watkin became head of the department in 1922 and served in that capacity until his death in 1952. His most notable buildings in Houston include the Museum of Fine Arts (1924), the Julia Ideson Library (1926; N.R., 1977; City Landmark, 1996), the Edward Albert Palmer Memorial Chapel (1927; N.R., 1984) and the Chemistry Building (1925) and Cohen House (1927) at Rice. At the same time he designed the Scott and Armstrong houses, he was designing the street layout and landscape plan of Broadacres (1923; N.R., 1980) which began at the western edge of the proposed historic district. Earlier he had designed the street layout and landscape plan for Southampton Place (1922). (*Handbook of Texas*);(N.R. Nomination, *Broadacres* by Anne Bohnn and Stephen Fox)

The contractors for the Watkin designed houses too were highly respected in their profession. Thomas M. Murray, builder of the Scott House, constructed other houses designed by Watkin in addition to other houses in the area. Gus C. Street, Jr., who built the Armstrong House, constructed other houses in the area as well. (*Texas General Contractors Monthly Bulletin*)

As stated previously, the Lipper House (1210 Berthea) was designed by C. B. Schoepl in 1925 and the Lovett House (1214 Berthea) was designed by Stayton Nunn in 1933. Both architects were considered foremost in their profession. The W. Browne Baker House (1213 Berthea) was designed and built in 1925 by the Russell Brown Company, one of the most prolific residential design and building firms in Texas, especially Houston, in the first half of the 20th century. They also constructed other homes many of which were built for prominent Houstonians in the other private place neighborhoods (i.e., Broadacres, Rossmoyne, etc.) They designed and built in 1919 the house for Ross Sterling at 4515 Yoakum (N.R., 1983; City Landmark, 1997).

The James A. Baker, Jr. House (1216 Bissonnet), built by Thomas T. Hopper, had been designed in 1926 by the Houston architect, Samuel Houston Dixon, Jr., who was active as an architect of houses and churches from the 1920s until his death in the late 1940s. He had also been one of the architects of the Kirkland House (1207 Bissonnet-demolished) which had been built in 1923 by Thomas M. Murray. Murray also had built the Belk House (1200 Bissonnet-demolished) in 1923. The house of Miss Emma Gaines (1131 Berthea) was designed by the Houston architects, Wilson, Morris & Crain circa 1948. F. Talbott Wilson and S. I. Morris, Jr., were both graduates of Rice and former students of William Ward Watkin. Morris built his house at 2 Waverly Court, across Bissonnet from the Scott House, in 1952.

Two notable Houston landscape architects are associated with the proposed historic district also. Not only did C. C. Fleming design the gardens of the James A. Baker, Jr. House, of which the garden fountain is the focal point, but he also designed gardens for some of the Houston's most prominent citizens, including Bayou Bend (1928, N.R., 1979; City Landmark, 1998-pending) and the San Jacinto Monument (1938, N.R., 1966). Ruth London designed the gardens of the Armstrong House in the 1930s. She designed a garden for Bayou Bend as well. (*Houston Architectural Guide* by Stephen Fox)

The historic properties in the proposed historic district preserve its architectural, cultural, and historical contexts despite changes that have occurred over time. The preservation of the Baker houses, the Lovett House, the Lipper-Burkhead House, and the Scott and Armstrong houses on multiple-lot sites, landscaped with mature trees and shrubs, attest to the historical significance of the district as an elite Houston neighborhood of the 1920s-40s era. Preservation of this architecture and landscape conserves the associations these properties have with two generations of Houston's leaders who lived with modesty and grace rather than ostentatiously. The district preserves the architectural and landscape settings associated with Bonner Means and James A. Baker, Jr., Adelaide Lovett and W. Browne Baker, Martha Wicks and H. Malcolm Lovett, Lucille and Edward Lipper, Annie Clarkson and Frank M. Burkhead, Marjorie Bankhead and I. M. Wilford, Ethel Gaines and Dr. Edward M. Armstrong, Louise Thomsen and J. Virgil Scott, Ella Myer and Edward G. Pearson, and Emma Gaines.



## **PREPARE AND ATTACH AN INVENTORY OF PROPERTIES (SEE EXAMPLE)**

*On the attached example of the inventory are listed ALL the different types of sites that need to be listed within the proposed historic district if they exist. Be sure to include every address for all properties in the historic district. Some rear buildings have their own address or half address (same street name as front house) **or** the rear buildings on the corner lots may have a different street name address than the front house. Be sure to list the different street name addresses for the rear buildings alphabetically in the listing of street names in the inventory (referencing it back to the main house address on another street). If the property owner's mailing address is different than the property address, note this on the inventory under the property owner's name. An asterisk by the name of the property owner denotes that they signed the petition for designation. Be sure to list all primary houses, outbuildings (garages, garage apartments, carriage houses, garden houses, etc.), structures (carriage steps, monument street posts, historic fences etc.) and vacant lots with their respective street numbers and addresses.*